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FRIDAY
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42° 28°
Just when you thought it was spring ... **B6**

Russia expels U.S. diplomats

Moscow ratchets up stakes in its tit-for-tat response for ex-spy's poisoning in Britain.

By MATTHEW BODNER
Washington Post

MOSCOW – Russia will close the U.S. Consulate in St. Petersburg and kick out 60 American diplomats in response to Monday's coordinated expulsion of Russian diplomats from the United States and a number of other countries, Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said Thursday.

The move continues an ongoing escalation of tit-for- tat between Moscow and the West that began in early March with the alleged poisoning of a former Russian double agent on British soil with a Soviet-designed nerve agent. U.S. officials said Thursday that another round might be coming.

"We reserve the right to respond," State Department spokeswoman Heather Nauert said in Washington. "Russia should not be acting like a victim," she said, calling Moscow's move "regrettable" and "unwarranted."

U.S. Ambassador Jon Huntsman Jr. was summoned Thursday night to the Foreign Ministry, where Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov informed him of Russia's response.

According to a Foreign Ministry statement, 58 U.S. diplomats from the Moscow embassy and two from the consulate in Yekaterinburg have been declared persona non grata. The United States expelled 60 Russians on Monday. The other U.S. consulate in Russia, in Vladivostok, will not be affected.

U.S. officials have hinted

See **RUSSIA** on A7 ►

TOP NEWS

KOREAS SET TALKS FOR APRIL

Historic postwar border summit is meant to pave way for negotiations with Trump. **A6**

A tearful return for Malala
Pakistani Nobel laureate back in homeland for first time since 2012. **A2**

Outrage boils over at funeral
Al Sharpton calls for change in Sacramento as cop's victim eulogized. **A5**

Pope performs sacred ritual
Francis washes the feet of inmates in Rome. **A2**

68 die in fire in Venezuelan jail
Relatives demand answers on blaze in crowded cells. **A6**

LOCAL NEWS

Minn. will join census lawsuit
States to challenge feds' added question on citizenship in 2020 survey. **B2**

Wetterling files go back to FBI
Ruling means the open-records case heads for a more lengthy review. **B1**

SPORTS

Wild holds off Dallas 5-2
Victory makes path to postseason a little easier. **C1**

Rare company after KAT's 56
Wolves' record-setting star strives to "make the right play." **C5**

BUSINESS

More available jobs reported
State's open positions underscore very tight labor market. **D1**

VARIETY

The women of 'Wolves'
All-female cast powers soccer drama at the Jungle Theater. **E1**

HAVE YOU HEARD?

A posh Pronto Pup stand, a new area for pets and lots of renovations will spruce up the State Fair this year. **B2**

IN WASHINGTON

DACA suit proceeds
Judge cites president's "racially charged" words. **A4**

Paul Ryan's future
Speaker looks like he'll seek re-election in Wisconsin. **A4**

It's a beautiful day for baseball ...

PATRICK SEMANSKY • Associated Press

The Twins and Orioles (and every other major league team) were on baseball's Opening Day schedule on Thursday. The Twins rallied for two runs in the ninth inning to tie the score at Camden Yards, but the Orioles' Adam Jones hit a walk-off homer in the 11th to win it. **Story, C1**

MN House GOP offers safety plan for schools

DFL decries $50M package for lacking gun restrictions.

By JESSIE VAN BERKEL
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School building security and mental health counseling are the best way to prevent school shootings in Minnesota, Republican legislators said Thursday, as they presented a $50 million school safety package.

It did not include one component their DFL counterparts view as essential: gun restrictions.

"This package will go a long ways to make sure we are doing everything we can to keep our children safe ... There is no more important thing that we will do this session," said Rep. Jenifer Loon, R-Eden Prairie, chairwoman of the House Education Finance Committee.

The proposal built on DFL Gov. Mark Dayton's $21 million school safety plan. Lawmakers and Dayton were spurred to act after the school shooting in Parkland, Fla., where 17 people were killed.

Both plans use safe schools tax levy dollars to support school districts. Local school officials would be able to use that money for a variety of

See **SAFETY** on A10 ►

Armed guards: More U.S. schools employing them. **A2**

Ministry's appeal halts topless bar

Council panel ruled that the bar's plan violates city law.

By ANDY MANNIX
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A Christian congregation in the Minneapolis Warehouse District found plenty of sympathy Thursday among some City Council members, who decided that a proposed topless bar was prohibited by a city law requiring sexually oriented establishments be 500 feet from places of religious assembly.

If the full council ratifies the 6-0 vote of the Zoning and Planning Committee, it will block downtown nightclub owner Peter Hafiz from moving forward with his plan to build a "Topless Tap House" at 415 1st Av. N., formerly the Imperial Room.

Hafiz isn't giving up yet. If he's thwarted by the City Council, he will take the dispute to the Minnesota Court of Appeals, said Dennis Johnson, the attorney representing Hafiz. Hafiz set into motion plans to

See **TAPROOM** on A7 ►

KARSTEN MORAN • New York Times

The Trump administration plans to announce an effort to weaken Obama-era pollution standards.

Trump looking to roll back vehicle emission standards

By CORAL DAVENPORT
New York Times

The Trump administration is expected to launch an effort in coming days to weaken greenhouse gas emissions and fuel economy standards for automobiles, handing a victory to car manufacturers and giving them ammunition to potentially roll back standards worldwide.

The move — which undercuts one of President Barack Obama's signature efforts to fight climate change — would also propel the Trump administration toward a courtroom clash with California, which has vowed to stick with the stricter rules even if Washington rolls back federal standards. That fight could end up creating one set of rules for cars sold in California and the 12 states that follow its lead, and weaker rules for the rest of the states, in effect splitting the nation into two markets.

See **EPA** on A10 ►

HIGHLIGHTS

- Standards set in 2012 require new cars and trucks to average 54.5 miles per gallon by 2025.
- The EPA estimates that 12 billion gallons of oil would be saved under those rules, along with reducing carbon dioxide pollution by 6 billion tons.
- Congress first set mileage standards in 1975 as a way to encourage energy conservation, mostly in response to an OPEC oil embargo.

A whole new ballgame for stadium suites

By ROCHELLE OLSON
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Now under new management, the suites that caused such an uproar a year ago at U.S. Bank Stadium are getting fairly favorable reviews.

Seats in the two taxpayer-owned suites once occupied by politically connected friends and family have been taken by event promoters, well-heeled business owners and charitable groups, according to the first year-round report required in the wake of the controversy.

While skepticism remains about the value of these suites, the practices that forced out two top officials last year appear to have ended.

"I am pleased," said Kathleen Blatz after looking over the list of attendees. Blatz became interim chairwoman of the Minnesota Sports Facilities Authority (MSFA) after Michele Kelm-

See **SUITES** on A10 ►